

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

News Release

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Many beneficiaries of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compensation and pension programs will receive an increase of 2.1 percent in monthly benefit payments to be mailed later this month.

The cost-of-living (COLA) adjustment affecting eligible beneficiaries on VA benefits rolls as of Dec. 1 was included in legislation recently signed by President Clinton.

Monthly payments to some 2.3 million veterans currently receiving disability compensation will now range from \$95 for a single veteran with a 10-percent disability rating to \$1,964 for a single veteran with a 100-percent disability rating.

Veterans whose service-connected disabilities are rated 30 percent or higher may receive additional allowances for dependents, based on the number of dependents and extent of disability.

Another 365,000 veterans will receive an increase in their pensions -- an income supplement program for wartime veterans whose permanent and total disabilities are not service-connected and which brings their incomes up to established levels.

The increase also applies to approximately 329,000 survivors of veterans who died of a service-connected disability -- the parents, spouses and children who receive benefits under VA's dependency and indemnity compensation program. Approximately 199,000 survivors of wartime veterans whose deaths were unrelated to service or a service-connected condition also will benefit from the increase in death pension benefits they receive as low-income families in need of support, up to an established level.